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Abstract of the Disclosure

The present invention provides a liquid handling system capable of automated dispensing and reformatting operations by virtue of a quick-release cannula array mounting system that permits cannula arrays to be changed automatically by the system or manually by a user. Automated changing of the cannula array is carried out by relative movement of the dispensing head and the sample support surface to deliver the attached cannula array to a storage location, releasing the array from the dispensing head, and attaching a new cannula array. Relative movement between the dispensing head and sample support surface in at least two dimensions increases flexibility of the system and makes self-loading of the cannula array practical. The system provides advantages in time and accuracy of cannula array changeover procedures. The automated cannula array changeover capability permits automated wellplate reformatting procedures, which can be performed quickly and accurately.